patria," and the same may be said of the man of true genius, he belongs to every country; and I should say it generally betrays a sense of inferiority wherever there is an attempt to exclude from fair competition the genius which comes from a foreign shore. The Romans did not this, even in the histrionic art; they excelled in gladiators, but they were inferior in sculpture, and painting, and architecture: by admitting foreigners they ended by taking the lead in architecture at least, and perhaps the studio of Emilius might have furnished a work worthy of the best Greek sculptor. And let me remark, that there are some things which no patriotism or spirit of nationality will accomplish. It will never make a man of taste admire an ordinary painting or an ungraceful statue; it will never reconcile him to a meagre elevation or an ill-designed public building.

I have generally attempted, in my papers which I have had the honour to read at the Institute, to shew the influence which the public institutions under consideration might have upon the character and destiny of the Romans; and perhaps there is much more connection than at first sight appears between the works of the architect and the national character of a people. The architect is called upon to create only those works which are suitable to the habits of the people, and his object should be to study to do these well; and I, for one, do not regret that he is now compelled to study the construction of churches and schools rather than that of theatres and porticoes. I am more than satisfied with the unarchitectural erections of Covent Garden and Drury-lane for theatres, and for porticoes and groves Vauxhall and the Surrey Zoological.

I am still compelled to speak only of the comparative innocence of our places of public resort; they are immeasurably inferior in architectural beauty, but they are a great improvement upon the moral aspect, and the restraints and the reflective influence of Christianity have even reached our public amusements. We cannot wonder at the indignation with which the early Christian writers viewed the theatres and places of public entertainment among the Romans, where every brutal passion or lascivious desire was gratified, and where vice in every form was enthroned by universal suffrage. We can excuse these holy men applying to these rendezvous of iniquity the title of "Devil's houses," for which I would hope no member of this Institute will ever have to give a plan. It is to my mind a happy circumstance that the "caves" is now transferred to the lecture room, the orchestra transformed into an Exeter-hall platform, the stage to the floor of the House of Commons, where sometimes members offer to die, and the pulpitum to the place from which the people are instructed in the truths and duties of Christianity. You will excuse me, then, if I rather rejoice over the ground you have lost in modern times for the exercise of your beautiful art; and that *my* profession has so amply supplied, by the sacred edifice, the field that is gone from you in the profane. I rejoice, not because either you or I have a stage more or less for our exertion, but because I think that the best interests of mankind and the happiness of the human race are more likely to be promoted by a church than by a theatre; and if we compare the national tastes of two neighbouring and rival countries in this respect, we at least shall be satisfied with the results:—and although I am loath to end this paper with a sentiment that may sound harsh to some, I cannot but be of opinion, that as the influence of Christianity prevails, and sober-minded pursuits follow as a matter of course in its train, theatrical representations, except for children, will give place: meanwhile, whatever tends to purify our places of public resort, and make them really places of recreation, is a benefit conferred upon the morals of the rising generation.

SMALL-POX HOSPITAL COMPETITION.—Fifty-four sets of designs for the new Small-pox and Vaccination Hospital have been received, and are now under the consideration of two architects appointed by the committee, in pursuance of the printed regulations, to select five designs for the committee's choice. We understand that many of the designs are very good.

THE SECRETARYSHIP TO THE COMMISSION OF FINE-ARTS.

THE *Art-Journal*, with reference to the remarks we made some time ago on the contemplated appointment of an Italian gentleman to take Mr. Eastlake's place as secretary to the Fine-Arts' Commission, says, we "made the giant we desired to kill," and asserts, "on good authority," that the present secretary is *not* about to retire, and that the foreigner in question "has *not* been appointed by the commissioners to any office connected with the commission, nor is any such appointment contemplated. The secretary's occasional employment of the gentleman in question in *subordinate official matters* (our contemporary admits), may have given rise to the statement referred to—which is simply absurd."

Absurd or not, the appointment of this gentleman would have been more so, and worse: and so far from now having greater doubt about the truth of the rumour which led to our observations (and which we then put most guardedly), we are more strongly satisfied than ever of its truth, and that we did not speak a minute too soon.

More than one, two, or three correspondents, who give us their names and speak with authority, state positively that the Italian gentleman does at this moment receive a salary for the performance of some of the duties devolving on Mr. Eastlake as secretary to the commission, and that but for our protest, and the response it elicited in several very influential quarters, he would have been in a very short time virtually, if not in name, the secretary.

The *Athenæum* remarked, when quoting our objection, and earnestly backing it, that, "In certain high quarters the patronage of the continental artist in nearly all the departments of art has grown into an offence to English genius." This appointment would certainly have clinched it bravely. We have no reason to regret our part in the "absurdity," and do not intend leaving the stage till the piece is played out.

EXTENSION OF SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY TO WATERLOO BRIDGE.

ON Thursday, in last week, Captain Simmons, the Government inspector, made a careful survey of all the works composing the extension of the South-Western Line from Nine Elms to the York-road; on Friday following the Board of Trade authorised the opening, and on Tuesday this took place. The extension is on a viaduct formed by about 250 brick arches, averaging 20 feet high, and is two miles in length.* It has four lines of rails throughout. It is carried over the first road it crosses, that from Vauxhall to Lambeth, by an oblique iron bridge, about 60 feet span. After passing some intermediate streets, it reaches another road of some importance, the South Lambeth-road, which is crossed by a sheer iron bridge, with side arches. The line now bends round to avoid Vauxhall-gardens, and crosses the Vauxhall-road by another iron bridge, in a span of fifty feet. The line is again deflected to the east, by the palace of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Near this it crosses the ancient road called Lambeth Butts, by a small bridge, and the main road leading to Lambeth Palace and Church, by a very extensive sheer iron bridge of two arches, having a pier in the middle of the road. Proceeding eastward, the line crosses the national schools of the parish of Lambeth, which have been rebuilt at the cost of the company in the Tudor style of architecture, from a design of their architect, Mr. Tite. After crossing the Westminster Bridge-road by a sheer bridge of iron of one span, and Granby-street and York-street by an ingeniously built bridge, the terminus is at length attained. The bridge across the Westminster-road is in one span of ninety feet, and it is exceedingly oblique. The terminus is raised on a terrace of arching, and will have an area nearly square, and covering eleven acres of land. Eventually, this station is intended to have four distinct termini, with a façade of 600 feet towards the York-road. The length of the present iron-roofed platform is, we are informed, 300 feet, but when completed it will be 600 feet. Its full width is about 150 feet. The Nine Elms station will be converted into a locomotive depôt and workshops. *Sic transit gloria.*

Mr. Locke, M.P., is the engineer, and Mr. W. Tite, F.R.S., as already mentioned, the architect, under whom the works have been executed by Messrs. Lee and Son, the contractors.

A bill for the further extension of this line at the other end, namely, from Salisbury to Yeovil and Exeter, passed the Lords in committee on the 7th instant.

* These arches are covered with Seyssel asphalte, to prevent the penetration of wet.

ARCHITECTS' LIABILITIES.

IMPORTANT CASE.

IN the case *Fitch v. Martyr*, tried on the 7th, in the Court of Common Pleas, the plaintiff was a builder and the defendant an architect. In 1846 the plaintiff was employed to build a house by contract for a Mr. Forman, as a sub-contractor under Mr. Banks; and the defendant was employed as an architect to superintend the erection of the house according to the plans. It was one of several houses recently built on the property of Archdeacon Burnie. The amount claimed was nearly 22*l.* in respect of extra work, in reference to a window extra the contract. The defendant pleaded his non-liability.

It appears that Banks, the contractor under whom the plaintiff worked, had become bankrupt, and had not got his certificate; and, also, that the plan and specification on which the house in question was to be built had been departed from in the alteration and finishing of a window, the extra cost for which was the amount claimed.—the alterations having been made at the suggestion of the defendant, as the architect, without the sanction and acquiescence of Mr. Forman, the owner of the house. It was now sought to make the architect responsible as a principal, he having gone out of the usual course of his calling. The value of the work done was undisputed, the only question being who was liable for its payment?

For the defence it was contended, first, that Banks, as the contractor, was liable to pay the plaintiff, as a sub-contractor under him, *for* extra work beyond the contract; secondly, if not Banks, that Forman, for whom the house was built, was liable; at any rate not the defendant, who was the mere architect between Banks and Forman. It was also objected that the alteration was a new contract, and being for an amount above 10*l.* it came within the provisions of the Statute of Frauds, and should have been in writing, and could not, therefore, be proved by oral testimony.

The jury, after an absence of a considerable time, found a verdict for the plaintiff for the amount claimed, on the ground that the alteration was a distinct job, not done on the credit of Forman, but on that of the defendant. We doubt the legality of the decision.

FIRE-ESCAPES IN THE COUNTRY.—A correspondent remarks—"Whilst observing with satisfaction the frequency and utility of these in the metropolis and suburbs, I have not—'in populous city pent' for many years—heard or read of their extensive use in the *country*, where, on the whole, they may be as necessary; and, of course, the danger to human life is equally important. They should be now nearly as common as *fire-engines*, though never superseding them, especially as the price is low,—a good 'escape,' I believe, not exceeding 30*l.* The best, and perhaps only really good one, is, on many accounts, the *canvas trough*, with a ladder forming the upper side. The management seems so simple that it might be safely trusted to strangers, and the materials are not likely to tempt robbery, so that it might be left loose near a church or market, &c., &c. If, happily, occasions of using them do not very often happen, there will be the same sense of security as in locks or bolts to doors and shutters, with the added motive of preparing it for others also—the poor and helpless. Fire-escapes might be washed with an anti-combustible solution, as mentioned by the writer in the *Mechanics' Magazine* several years back."

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